B L
1138
.64
E5
1911
MAIN

UC-NRLF
B 4 022 978

IR EDWIN
ARNOLD

THE SONG CELESTIAL

Mdccccxi

·FROM·THE·LIBRARY·OF·
A. W. Ryder

SIGILLVM·VNIVERSITATIS·CALIFORNIENSIS
FIAT LVX
MDCCCLXVIII

EX LIBRIS

PASSAGES FROM THE SONG CELESTIAL

Magistrorum reverentia a Brachmanis inter sanctissima pietatis officia refertur. Ergo te primum, Vates sanctissime, Numinisque hypopheta! quisquis tandem inter mortales dictus tu fueris, carminis hujus auctor, cujus oraculis mens ad excelsa quæque æterna atque divina, cum inenarrabili quâdam delectatione rapitur — te primum, inquam, salvere jubeo, et vestigia tua semper adoro.

F. VON SCHLEGEL.

[Reverence for the Masters is regarded by the Brahmans as one of the most sacred duties of religion. Therefore thee first of all, Bard most holy, interpreter of the Divinity, whatever thou wert named among mortals, author of this song, whose utterances carry the mind to all things high, eternal, and divine, with an ineffable delight, thee first of all I hail and thy footsteps I forever adore.]

PASSAGES FROM THE SONG CELESTIAL BY SIR EDWIN ARNOLD

PORTLAND MAINE
THOMAS B MOSHER
MDCCCCXI

BL1138
.64
E5
1911
MAIN

From the library of
A. W. Ryder

[illegible]

FOREWORD

BRIEFLY *stated Sir Edwin Arnold's translation from the Sanskrit text of* The Song Celestial *or* Bhagavad-Gîtâ *is a discourse between Arjuna, Prince of India, and the Supreme Being under the form of Krishna. As set forth by Charles Johnston in his recent prose version* (*1908*) "Bhagavad-Gîtâ *means The Songs of the Master, that is, of Krishna, Prince of Dvaraka, a Rajput of royal line. The occasion is the decisive battle of Kurukshetra, and the opening of the poem is epic and martial in spirit. Only a part of the battle is recorded. We are not told the result. For this work is but a section of a much longer poem, the Mahâbhârata, which embodies a whole cycle of Indian history, tradition and legend.*"

The question that arises as to the date of the Gîtâ *is at present insoluble. Much has been written to place it about the Third Century A. D., but, on the other hand, there are not wanting*

M31911

those who see in its inspired teachings a more remote origin. Again Professor Johnston may be profitably quoted: "If we are justified in holding the views already suggested, it was written at different times, through several centuries, growing gradually to fuller and fuller completeness." In this view the latest scholarship would seem to find utterance. So far as our knowledge of the text is concerned the prose version by Charles Wilkins (1785) was the first translation of the first book of Sanskrit literature to be offered English readers. It was probably best known in America through this medium up to the time of Arnold's earliest edition issued in 1885, just one hundred years later. For those who would go more deeply into its philosophy the Preface by Mr. John Davies to The Sacred Lay *(London, 1907) and Johnston's still later rendition with commentaries upon each book, as well as a general Introduction, leave very little to seek elsewhere.*

One is not able at all times to locate the precise moment in which a great work presents itself and produces a lasting effect. It was the casual opening of a current Atlantic *some two years ago in which the writer of the story cited these few lines:*

FOREWORD

"He is not lost, thou Son of Prithâ! No!
Nor earth, nor heaven is forfeit, even for him,
Because no heart that holds one right desire
Treadeth the road of loss!"

Reading these words was equivalent to that vital experience voiced by Keats as the feeling of all men who first come into touch with an undying truth:

"Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken."

In regard to our selections from this great scripture of the Hindu mind, we begin at the commencement of the Second Book which is, in fact, where the poem opens "as an exposition of philosophy." One can well understand that it was a labour of love performed by a poet and not merely by the scholar. It is these passages which bear the impress of lasting poetic loveliness that we here offer our clientele. One may know very little about the time or place, or whether, indeed, there is any historical basis in these Songs of the Master. They come to us with the same divine warrant that is found in the Book of Job, in the Psalms, in Ecclesiastes. That Emerson drew from these deep sources, that Whitman was acquainted with this ancient literature, and that *to-day they are more than ever witnesses of a revived interest in " one of the noblest scriptures of India, one of the deepest scriptures of the world " is all we really need to know in taking their great human validity of utterance to our hearts. Professor Johnston has nobly said, and we conclude with his remark :*

" There is but one problem of life ; throughout all lands, in all ages, it has been the same. It is the problem of the soul and immortality. From difference of temperament or race, or both, there have been certain widely divergent lines in the effort of ancient India to solve the immemorial secret. Each had its growth and development ; each its long line of adherents ; each its controversies, its commentators, its triumphs. In course of time, the difference between these systems grew more marked than their agreement, and controversy overshadowed appreciation. One great task of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ *is that of reconciler between these divergent systems, and the revelation of the truth that they all lead to a single goal."*

T. B. M.

* * *

PASSAGES FROM THE SONG CELESTIAL

PASSAGES from *The Song Celestial* are chosen as follows:

SECTIONS I–VI. From Book II: The Book of Doctrines.

SECTIONS VII–VIII. From Book III: The Book of Virtue in Work.

SECTION IX. From Book IV: The Book of the Religion of Knowledge.

SECTION X. From Book V: The Book of Religion by Renouncing Fruit of Works.

SECTION XI. From Book VI: The Book of Religion by Self-Restraint.

SECTIONS XII–XIII. From Book VII: The Book of Religion by Discernment.

SECTION XIV. Book VIII complete: The Book of Religion by Devotion to the One Supreme God.

SECTIONS XV–XVI. From Book IX: The Book of Religion by the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery.

SECTION XVII. Book XII complete: The Book of the Religion of Faith.

SECTIONS XVIII–XIX. From Book XIII: The Book of Religion by Separation of Matter and Spirit.

SECTIONS XX–XXI. From Book XIV: The Book of Religion by Separation from the Qualities.

SECTIONS XXII–XXIII. From Book XV: The Book of Religion by Attaining the Supreme.

SECTIONS XXIV–XXVI. From Book XVI: The Book of the Separateness of the Divine and Undivine.

SECTION XXVII. From Book XVIII: The Book of Religion by Deliverance and Renunciation.

PASSAGES FROM THE SONG CELESTIAL

I

KRISHNA

THOU grievest where no grief should be! thou speak'st
Words lacking wisdom! for the wise in heart
Mourn not for those that live, nor those that die.
Nor I, nor thou, nor any one of these,
Ever was not, nor ever will not be,
For ever and for ever afterwards.
All, that doth live, lives always! To man's frame
As there come infancy and youth and age,
So come there raisings-up and layings-down
Of other and of other life-abodes,
Which the wise know, and fear not. This that irks —
Thy sense-life, thrilling to the elements —
Bringing thee heat and cold, sorrows and joys,
'T is brief and mutable! Bear with it, Prince!

As the wise bear. The soul which is not moved,
The soul that with a strong and constant calm
Takes sorrow and takes joy indifferently,
Lives in the life undying! That which is
Can never cease to be; that which is not
Will not exist. To see this truth of both
Is theirs who part essence from accident,
Substance from shadow. Indestructible,
Learn thou! the Life is, spreading life through all;
It cannot anywhere, by any means,
Be anywise diminished, stayed, or changed.
But for these fleeting frames which it informs
With spirit deathless, endless, infinite,
They perish. Let them perish, Prince! and fight!
He who shall say, "Lo! I have slain a man!"
He who shall think, "Lo! I am slain!" those both
Know naught! Life cannot slay. Life is not slain!

II

I say to thee weapons reach not the Life;
Flame burns it not, waters cannot o'erwhelm,
Nor dry winds wither it. Impenetrable,
Unentered, unassailed, unharmed, untouched,
Immortal, all-arriving, stable, sure,
Invisible, ineffable, by word
And thought uncompassed, ever all itself,
Thus is the Soul declared! How wilt thou, then, —
Knowing it so, — grieve when thou shouldst not grieve?

How, if thou hearest that the man new-dead
Is, like the man new-born, still living man —
One same, existent Spirit — wilt thou weep?
The end of birth is death; the end of death
Is birth: this is ordained! and mournest thou,
Chief of the stalwart arm! for what befalls
Which could not otherwise befall? The birth
Of living things comes unperceived; the death
Comes unperceived; between them, beings perceive:
What is there sorrowful herein, dear Prince?

III

This Life within all living things, my Prince!
Hides beyond harm; scorn thou to suffer, then,
For that which cannot suffer. Do thy part!
Be mindful of thy name, and tremble not!
Nought better can betide a martial soul
Than lawful war; happy the warrior
To whom comes joy of battle — comes, as now,
Glorious and fair, unsought; opening for him
A gateway unto Heav'n. But, if thou shunn'st
This honourable field — a Kshattriya —
If, knowing thy duty and thy task, thou bidd'st
Duty and task go by — that shall be sin!
And those to come shall speak thee infamy
From age to age; but infamy is worse
For men of noble blood to bear than death!
The chiefs upon their battle-chariots

Will deem 't was fear that drove thee from the fray.
Of those who held thee mighty-souled the scorn
Thou must abide, while all thine enemies
Will scatter bitter speech of thee, to mock
The valour which thou hadst; what fate could fall
More grievously than this? Either — being killed —
Thou wilt win Swarga's safety, or — alive
And victor — thou wilt reign an earthly king.
Therefore, arise, thou Son of Kunti! brace
Thine arm for conflict, nerve thy heart to meet —
As things alike to thee — pleasure or pain,
Profit or ruin, victory or defeat:
So minded, gird thee to the fight, for so
Thou shalt not sin!

IV

Seek refuge in thy soul; have there thy heaven!
Scorn them that follow virtue for her gifts!
The mind of pure devotion — even here —
Casts equally aside good deeds and bad,
Passing above them. Unto pure devotion
Devote thyself: with perfect meditation
Comes perfect act, and the right-hearted rise —
More certainly because they seek no gain —
Forth from the bands of body, step by step,
To highest seats of bliss. When thy firm soul
Hath shaken off those tangled oracles
Which ignorantly guide, then shall it soar

To high neglect of what 's denied or said,
This way or that way, in doctrinal writ.
Troubled no longer by the priestly lore,
Safe shall it live, and sure; steadfastly bent
On meditation. This is Yôg — and Peace!

V

When one, O Prithâ's Son! —
Abandoning desires which shake the mind —
Finds in his soul full comfort for his soul,
He hath attained the Yôg — that man is such!
In sorrows not dejected, and in joys
Not overjoyed; dwelling outside the stress
Of passion, fear, and anger; fixed in calms
Of lofty contemplation; — such an one
Is Muni, is the Sage, the true Recluse!
He who to none and nowhere overbound
By ties of flesh, takes evil things and good
Neither desponding nor exulting, such
Bears wisdom's plainest mark! He who shall draw
As the wise tortoise draws its four feet safe
Under its shield, his five frail senses back
Under the spirit's buckler from the world
Which else assails them, such an one, my Prince!
Hath wisdom's mark! Things that solicit sense
Hold off from the self-governed; nay, it comes,
The appetites of him who lives beyond
Depart, — aroused no more. Yet may it chance,

O Son of Kunti ! that a governed mind
Shall some time feel the sense-storms sweep, and wrest
Strong self-control by the roots. Let him regain
His kingdom ! let him conquer this, and sit
On Me intent. That man alone is wise
Who keeps the mastery of himself ! If one
Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction ; from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
Recklessness ; then the memory — all betrayed —
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone.
But, if one deals with objects of the sense
Not loving and not hating, making them
Serve his free soul, which rests serenely lord,
Lo ! such a man comes to tranquillity ;
And out of that tranquillity shall rise
The end and healing of his earthly pains,
Since the will governed sets the soul at peace.

VI

Yea ! whoso, shaking off the yoke of flesh
Lives lord, not servant, of his lusts ; set free
From pride, from passion, from the sin of "Self,"
Toucheth tranquillity ! O Prithâ's Son !
That is the state of Brahm ! There rests no dread
When that last step is reached ! Live where he will,

Die when he may, such passeth from all 'plaining,
To blest Nirvâna, with the Gods, attaining.

VII

He that abstains
To help the rolling wheels of this great world,
Glutting his idle sense, lives a lost life,
Shameful and vain. Existing for himself,
Self-concentrated, serving self alone,
No part hath he in aught; nothing achieved,
Nought wrought or unwrought toucheth him; no hope
Of help for all the living things of earth
Depends from him. Therefore, thy task prescribed
With spirit unattached gladly perform,
Since in performance of plain duty man
Mounts to his highest bliss. By works alone
Janak and ancient saints reached blessedness!
Moreover, for the upholding of thy kind,
Action thou should'st embrace. What the wise choose
The unwise people take; what best men do
The multitude will follow. Look on me,
Thou Son of Prithâ! in the three wide worlds
I am not bound to any toil, no height
Awaits to scale, no gift remains to gain,
Yet I act here! and, if I acted not —
Earnest and watchful — those that look to me

For guidance, sinking back to sloth again
Because I slumbered, would decline from good,
And I should break earth's order and commit
Her offspring unto ruin, Bharata!

VIII

They who shall keep
My ordinance thus, the wise and willing hearts,
Have quittance from all issue of their acts;
But those who disregard My ordinance,
Thinking they know, know nought, and fall to loss,
Confused and foolish. 'Sooth, the instructed one
Doth of his kind, following what fits him most:
And lower creatures of their kind; in vain
Contending 'gainst the law. Needs must it be
The objects of the sense will stir the sense
To like and dislike, yet th' enlightened man
Yields not to these, knowing them enemies.
Finally, this is better, that one do
His own task as he may, even though he fail,
Than take tasks not his own, though they seem good.
To die performing duty is no ill;
But who seeks other roads shall wander still.

IX

Manifold the renewals of my birth
Have been, Arjuna! and of thy births, too!

But mine I know, and thine thou knowest not,
O Slayer of thy Foes! Albeit I be
Unborn, undying, indestructible,
The Lord of all things living; not the less —
By Maya, by my magic which I stamp
On floating Nature-forms, the primal vast —
I come, and go, and come. When Righteousness
Declines, O Bharata! when Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move a man with men,
Succouring the good, thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again.
Who knows the truth touching my births on earth
And my divine work, when he quits the flesh
Puts on its load no more, falls no more down
To earthly birth: to Me he comes, dear Prince!

Many there be who come! from fear set free,
From anger, from desire; keeping their hearts
Fixed upon me—my Faithful—purified
By sacred flame of Knowledge. Such as these
Mix with my being. Whoso worship me,
Them I exalt; but all men everywhere
Shall fall into my path; albeit, those souls
Which seek reward for works, make sacrifice
Now, to the lower gods. I say to thee
Here have they their reward. But I am He
Made the Four Castes, and portioned them a place

After their qualities and gifts. Yea, I
Created, the Reposeful; I that live
Immortally, made all those mortal births:
For works soil not my essence, being works
Wrought uninvolved.[1] Who knows me acting thus
Unchained by action, action binds not him;
And, so perceiving, all those saints of old
Worked, seeking for deliverance. Work thou
As, in the days gone by, thy fathers did.

X

This world's Lord makes
Neither the work, nor passion for the work,
Nor lust for fruit of work; the man's own self
Pushes to these! The Master of this World
Takes on himself the good or evil deeds
Of no man—dwelling beyond! Mankind errs here
By folly, darkening knowledge. But, for whom
That darkness of the soul is chased by light,
Splendid and clear shines manifest the Truth
As if a Sun of Wisdom sprang to shed
Its beams of dawn. Him meditating still,
Him seeking, with Him blended, stayed on Him,
The souls illuminated take that road

---

[1] Without desire of fruit.

Which hath no turning back—their sins flung off
By strength of faith. [Who will may have this Light;
Who hath it sees.] To him who wisely sees,
The Brahman with his scrolls and sanctities,
The cow, the elephant, the unclean dog,
The Outcast gorging dog's meat, are all one.

XI

ARJUNA

And what road goeth he who, having faith,
Fails, Krishna! in the striving; falling back
From holiness, missing the perfect rule?
Is he not lost, straying from Brahma's light,
Like the vain cloud, which floats 'twixt earth and heaven
When lightning splits it, and it vanisheth?
Fain would I hear thee answer me herein,
Since, Krishna! none save thou can clear the doubt.

KRISHNA

He is not lost, thou Son of Prithâ! No!
Nor earth, nor heaven is forfeit, even for him,
Because no heart that holds one right desire
Treadeth the road of loss! He who should fail,
Desiring righteousness, cometh at death
Unto the Region of the Just; dwells there

Measureless years, and being born anew,
Beginneth life again in some fair home
Amid the mild and happy. It may chance
He doth descend into a Yôgin house
On Virtue's breast; but that is rare! Such birth
Is hard to be obtained on this earth, Chief!
So hath he back again what heights of heart
He did achieve, and so he strives anew
To perfectness, with better hope, dear Prince!
For by the old desire he is drawn on
Unwittingly; and only to desire
The purity of Yôg is to pass
Beyond the *Sabdabrahm,* the spoken Ved.
But, being Yôgi, striving strong and long,
Purged from transgressions, perfected by births
Following on births, he plants his feet at last
Upon the farther path. Such as one ranks
Above ascetics, higher than the wise,
Beyond achievers of vast deeds! Be thou
Yôgi Arjuna! And of such believe,
Truest and best is he who worships Me
With inmost soul, stayed on My Mystery!

XII

I will declare to thee that utmost lore,
Whole and particular, which, when thou knowest,
Leaveth no more to know here in this world.

Of many thousand mortals, one, perchance,
Striveth for Truth ; and of those few that strive —
Nay, and rise high — one only — here and there —
Knoweth Me, as I am, the very Truth.

Earth, water, flame, air, ether, life, and mind,
And individuality — those eight
Make up the showing of Me, Manifest.

These be my lower Nature ; learn the higher,
Whereby, thou Valiant One ! this Universe
Is, by its principle of life, produced ;
Whereby the worlds of visible things are born
As from a *Yoni.* Know ! I am that womb :
I make and I unmake this Universe :
Than me there is no other Master, Prince !
No other Maker ! All these hang on me
As hangs a row of pearls upon its string.
I am the fresh taste of the water ; I
The silver of the moon, the gold o' the sun,
The word of worship in the Veds, the thrill
That passeth in the ether, and the strength
Of man's shed seed. I am the good sweet smell
Of the moistened earth, I am the fire's red light,
The vital air moving in all which moves,
The holiness of hallowed souls, the root
Undying, whence hath sprung whatever is ;
The wisdom of the wise, the intellect
Of the informed, the greatness of the great.

The splendour of the splendid. Kunti's Son!
These am I, free from passion and desire;
Yet am I right desire in all who yearn,
Chief of the Bhâratas! for all those moods,
Soothfast, or passionate, or ignorant,
Which Nature frames, deduce from me; but all
Are merged in me — not I in them! The world —
Deceived by those three qualities of being —
Wotteth not Me Who am outside them all,
Above them all, Eternal! Hard it is
To pierce that veil divine of various shows
Which hideth Me; yet they who worship Me
Pierce it and pass beyond.

XIII

Who cleave, who seek in Me
Refuge from birth and death, those have the Truth!
Those know Me BRAHMA; know Me Soul of Souls,
The ADHYÂTMAN; know KARMA, my work;
Know I am ADHIBHÛTA, Lord of Life,
And ADHIDAIVA, Lord of all the Gods,
And ADHIYAJNA, Lord of Sacrifice;
Worship Me well, with hearts of love and faith,
And find and hold me in the hour of death.

XIV

ARJUNA

Who is that BRAHMA? What that Soul of Souls,
The ADHYÂTMAN? What, Thou Best of All!
Thy work, the KARMA? Tell me what it is
Thou namest ADHIBHÛTA? What again
Means ADHIDAIVA? Yea, and how it comes
Thou canst be ADHIYAJNA in thy flesh?
Slayer of Madhu! Further, make me know
How good men find thee in the hour of death?

KRISHNA

I BRAHMA am! the One Eternal GOD,
And ADHYÂTMAN is My Being's name,
The Soul of Souls! What goeth forth from Me,
Causing all life to live, is KARMA called:
And, Manifested in divided forms,
I am the ADHIBHÛTA, Lord of Lives;
And ADHIDAIVA, Lord of all the Gods,
Because I am PURUSHA, who begets.
And ADHIYAJNA, Lord of Sacrifice,
I — speaking with thee in this body here —
Am, thou embodied one! (for all the shrines
Flame unto Me!) And, at the hour of death,
He that hath meditated Me alone,
In putting off his flesh, comes forth to Me,

Enters into My Being — doubt thou not!
But, if he meditated otherwise
At hour of death, in putting off the flesh,
He goes to what he looked for, Kunti's Son!
Because the Soul is fashioned to its like.

Have Me, then, in thy heart always! and fight!
Thou too, when heart and mind are fixed on Me,
Shalt surely come to Me! All come who cleave
With never-wavering will of firmest faith,
Owning none other Gods: all come to Me,
The Uttermost, Purusha, Holiest!

Whoso hath known Me, Lord of sage and singer,
  Ancient of days; of all the Three Worlds Stay,
Boundless, — but unto every atom Bringer
  Of that which quickens it: whoso, I say,

Hath known My form, which passeth mortal knowing;
  Seen my effulgence — which no eye hath seen —
Than the sun's burning gold more brightly glowing,
  Dispersing darkness, — unto him hath been

Right life! And, in the hour when life is ending,
  With mind set fast and trustful piety,
Drawing still breath beneath calm brows unbending,
  In happy peace that faithful one doth die, —

In glad peace passeth to Purusha's heaven.
The place which they who read the Vedas name
AKSHARAM, "Ultimate;" whereto have striven
Saints and ascetics — their road is the same.

That way — the highest way — goes he who shuts
The gates of all his senses, locks desire
Safe in his heart, centres the vital airs
Upon his parting thought, steadfastly set;
And, murmuring OM, the sacred syllable —
Emblem of BRAHM — dies, meditating Me.

For who, none other Gods regarding, looks
Ever to Me, easily am I gained
By such a Yôgi; and, attaining Me,
They fall not — those Mahatmas — back to birth,
To life, which is the place of pain, which ends,
But take the way of utmost blessedness.

The worlds, Arjuna! — even Brahma's world —
Roll back again from Death to Life's unrest;
But they, O Kunti's Son! that reach to Me,
Taste birth no more. If ye know Brahma's Day
Which is a thousand Yugas; if ye know
The thousand Yugas making Brahma's Night,
Then know ye Day and Night as He doth know!
When that vast Dawn doth break, th' Invisible
Is brought anew into the Visible;

When that deep Night doth darken, all which is
Fades back again to Him Who sent it forth;
Yea! this vast company of living things —
Again and yet again produced — expires
At Brahma's Nightfall; and, at Brahma's Dawn,
Riseth, without its will, to life new-born.
But — higher, deeper, innermost — abides
Another Life, not like the life of sense,
Escaping sight, unchanging. This endures
When all created things have passed away:
This is that Life named the Unmanifest,
The Infinite! the All! the Uttermost.
Thither arriving none return. That Life
Is Mine, and I am there! And, Prince! by faith
Which wanders not, there is a way to come
Thither. I, the PURUSHA, I Who spread
The Universe around me — in Whom dwell
All living Things — may so be reached and seen!

Richer than holy fruit on Vedas growing,
  Greater than gifts, better than prayer or fast,
Such wisdom is! The Yôgi, this way knowing,
  Comes to the Utmost Perfect Peace at last.

XV

By Me the whole vast Universe of things
Is spread abroad; — by Me, the Unmanifest!

In Me are all existences contained;
Not I in them!

Yet they are not contained,
Those visible things! Receive and strive to embrace
The mystery majestical! My Being —
Creating all, sustaining all — still dwells
Outside of all!

XVI

The minds untaught mistake Me, veiled in form; —
Naught see they of My secret Presence, nought
Of My hid Nature, ruling all which lives.
Vain hopes pursuing, vain deeds doing; fed
On vainest knowledge, senselessly they seek
An evil way, the way of brutes and fiends.
But My Mahatmas, those of noble soul
Who tread the path celestial, worship Me
With hearts unwandering, — knowing Me the Source,
Th' Eternal Source, of Life. Unendingly
They glorify Me; seek Me; keep their vows
Of reverence and love, with changeless faith
Adoring Me. Yea, and those too adore,
Who, offering sacrifice of wakened hearts,
Have sense of one pervading Spirit's stress,
One Force in every place, though manifold!
I am the Sacrifice! I am the Prayer!

I am the Funeral-Cake set for the dead!
I am the healing herb! I am the ghee,
The Mantra, and the flame, and that which burns!
I am — of all this boundless Universe —
The Father, Mother, Ancestor, and Guard!
The end of Learning! That which purifies
In lustral water! I am OM! I am
Rig-Veda, Sama-Veda, Yajur-Ved;
The Way, the Fosterer, the Lord, the Judge,
The Witness; the Abode, the Refuge-House,
The Friend, the Fountain and the Sea of Life
Which sends, and swallows up; Treasure of Worlds
And Treasure-Chamber! Seed and Seed-Sower,
Whence endless harvests spring! Sun's heat is mine;
Heaven's rain is mine to grant or to withhold;
Death am I, and Immortal Life I am,
Arjuna! SAT and ASAT, Visible Life,
And Life Invisible!

Yea! those who learn
The threefold Veds, who drink the Soma-wine,
Purge sins, pay sacrifice — from Me they earn
Passage to Swarga; where the meats divine

Of great gods feed them in high Indra's heaven.
Yet they, when that prodigious joy is o'er,
Paradise spent, and wage for merits given,
Come to the world of death and change once more.

They had their recompense! they stored their treasure,
  Following the threefold Scripture and its writ;
Who seeketh such gaineth the fleeting pleasure
  Of joy which comes and goes! I grant them it!

  But to those blessèd ones who worship Me,
Turning not otherwhere, with minds set fast,
I bring assurance of full bliss beyond.

  Nay, and of hearts which follow other gods
In simple faith, their prayers arise to me,
O Kunti's Son! though they pray wrongfully;
For I am the Receiver and the Lord
Of every sacrifice, which these know not
Rightfully; so they fall to earth again!
Who follow gods go to their gods; who vow
Their souls to Pitris go to Pitris; minds
To evil Bhûts given o'er sink to the Bhûts;
And whoso loveth Me cometh to Me.
Whoso shall offer Me in faith and love
A leaf, a flower, a fruit, water poured forth,
That offering I accept, lovingly made
With pious will. Whate'er thou doest, Prince!
Eating or sacrificing, giving gifts,
Praying or fasting, let it all be done
For Me, as Mine. So shalt thou free thyself
From *Karmabandh,* the chain which holdeth men
To good and evil issue, so shalt come

Safe unto Me — when thou art quit of flesh —
By faith and abdication joined to Me!

I am alike for all! I know not hate,
I know not favour! What is made is Mine!
But them that worship Me with love, I love;
They are in Me, and I in them!

Nay, Prince!
If one of evil life turn in his thought
Straightly to Me, count him amidst the good;
He hath the high way chosen; he shall grow
Righteous ere long; he shall attain that peace
Which changes not. Thou Prince of India!
Be certain none can perish, trusting Me!
O Prithâ's Son! whoso will turn to Me,
Though they be born from the very womb of Sin,
Woman or man; sprung of the Vaiśya caste
Or lowly disregarded Sudra, — all
Plant foot upon the highest path; how then
The holy Brahmans and My Royal Saints?
Ah! ye who into this ill world are come —
Fleeting and false — set your faith fast on Me!
Fix heart and thought on Me! Adore Me! Bring
Offerings to Me! Make Me prostrations! Make
Me your supremest joy! and, undivided,
Unto My rest your spirits shall be guided.

XVII

ARJUNA

Lord! of the men who serve Thee — true in heart —
As God revealed; and of the men who serve,
Worshipping Thee Unrevealed, Unbodied, Far,
Which take the better way of faith and life?

KRISHNA

Whoever serve Me — as I show Myself —
Constantly true, in full devotion fixed,
Those hold I very holy. But who serve —
Worshipping Me The One, The Invisible,
The Unrevealed, Unnamed, Unthinkable,
Uttermost, All-pervading, Highest, Sure —
Who thus adore Me, mastering their sense,
Of one set mind to all, glad in all good,
These blessed souls come unto Me.
Yet, hard
The travail is for such as bend their minds
To reach th' Unmanifest. That viewless path
Shall scarce be trod by man bearing the flesh!
But whereso any doeth all his deeds
Renouncing self for Me, full of Me, fixed
To serve only the Highest, night and day
Musing on Me — him will I swiftly lift
Forth from life's ocean of distress and death,

Whose soul clings fast to Me. Cling thou to Me!
Clasp Me with heart and mind! so shalt thou dwell
Surely with Me on high. But if thy thought
Droops from such height; if thou be'st weak to set
Body and soul upon Me constantly,
Despair not! give Me lower service! seek
To reach Me, worshipping with steadfast will;
And, if thou canst not worship steadfastly,
Work for Me, toil in works pleasing to Me!
For he that laboureth right for love of Me
Shall finally attain! But, if in this
Thy faint heart fails, bring Me thy failure! find
Refuge in Me! let fruits of labour go,
Renouncing hope for Me, with lowliest heart,
So shalt thou come; for, though to know is more
Than diligence, yet worship better is
Than knowing, and renouncing better still.
Near to renunciation — very near —
Dwelleth Eternal Peace!
Who hateth nought
Of all which lives, living himself benign,
Compassionate, from arrogance exempt,
Exempt from love of self, unchangeable
By good or ill; patient, contented, firm
In faith, mastering himself, true to his word,
Seeking Me, heart and soul; vowed unto Me,—
That man I love! Who troubleth not his kind,
And is not troubled by them; clear of wrath,

Living too high for gladness, grief, or fear,
That man I love! Who, dwelling quiet-eyed,
Stainless, serene, well-balanced, unperplexed,
Working with Me, yet from all works detached,
That man I love! Who, fixed in faith on Me,
Dotes upon none, scorns none; rejoices not,
And grieves not, letting good or evil hap
Light when it will, and when it will depart,
That man I love! Who, unto friend and foe
Keeping an equal heart, with equal mind
Bears shame and glory; with an equal peace
Takes heat and cold, pleasure and pain; abides
Quit of desires, hears praise or calumny
In passionless restraint, unmoved by each;
Linked by no ties to earth, steadfast in Me,
That man I love! But most of all I love
Those happy ones to whom 't is life to live
In single fervid faith and love unseeing,
Drinking the blessèd Amrit[1] of my Being!

XVIII

Know thou that Nature and the Spirit both
Have no beginning! Know that qualities
And changes of them are by Nature wrought;
That Nature puts to work the acting frame,

---

[1] The nectar of immortality.

But Spirit doth inform it, and so cause
Feeling of pain and pleasure. Spirit, linked
To moulded matter, entereth into bond
With qualities by Nature framed, and, thus
Married to matter, breeds the birth again
In good or evil *yonis*.

XIX

Whoso thus knows himself, and knows his soul
PURUSHA, working through the qualities
With Nature's modes, the light hath come for him!
Whatever flesh he bears, never again
Shall he take on its load. Some few there be
By meditation find the Soul in Self
Self-schooled; and some by long philosophy
And holy life reach thither; some by works:
Some, never so attaining, hear of light
From other lips, and seize, and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those — to teaching true —
Overpass Death!
Wherever, Indian Prince!
Life is — of moving things, or things unmoved,
Plant or still seed — know, what is there hath grown
By bond of Matter and of Spirit: Know
He sees indeed who sees in all alike
The living, lordly Soul; the Soul Supreme,
Imperishable amid the Perishing:

For, whoso thus beholds, in every place,
In every form, the same, one, Living Life,
Doth no more wrongfulness unto himself,
But goes the highest road which brings to bliss.
Seeing, he sees, indeed, who sees that works
Are Nature's wont, for Soul to practise by
Acting, yet not the agent; sees the mass
Of separate living things — each of its kind —
Issue from One, and blend again to One:
Then hath he BRAHMA, he attains!

XX

This Universe the womb is where I plant
Seed of all lives! Thence, Prince of India, comes
Birth to all beings! Whoso, Kunti's Son!
Mothers each mortal form, Brahma conceives,
And I am He that fathers, sending seed!

XXI

Moreover, when a soul departeth, fixed
In Soothfastness, it goeth to the place —
Perfect and pure — of those that know all Truth.
If it departeth in set habitude
Of Impulse, it shall pass into the world
Of spirits tied to works; and, if it dies
In hardened Ignorance, that blinded soul
Is born anew in some unlighted womb.

The fruit of Soothfastness is true and sweet;
The fruit of lusts is pain and toil; the fruit
Of Ignorance is deeper darkness. Yea!
For Light brings light, and Passion ache to have;
And gloom, bewilderments, and ignorance
Grow forth from Ignorance. Those of the first
Rise ever higher; those of the second mode
Take a mid place; the darkened souls sink back
To lower deeps, loaded with witlessness!

When, watching life, the living man perceives
The only actors are the Qualities,
And knows what rules beyond the Qualities,
Then is he come nigh unto Me!
The Soul,
Thus passing forth from the Three Qualities —
Whereby arise all bodies — overcomes
Birth, Death, Sorrow, and Age; and drinketh deep
The undying wine of Amrit.

XXII

KRISHNA

Men call the Aśwattha, — the Banyan-tree,—
Which hath its boughs beneath, its roots above,—
The ever-holy tree. Yea! for its leaves
Are green and waving hymns which whisper Truth!
Who knows the Aśwattha, knows Veds, and all.

Its branches shoot to heaven and sink to earth,
Even as the deeds of men, which take their birth
  From qualities: its silver sprays and blooms,
And all the eager verdure of its girth,

Leap to quick life at kiss of sun and air,
As men's lives quicken to the temptings fair
  Of wooing sense: its hanging rootlets seek
The soil beneath, helping to hold it there,

As actions wrought amid this world of men
Bind them by ever-tightening bonds again.
  If ye knew well the teaching of the Tree,
What its shape saith; and whence it springs; and, then

How it must end, and all the ills of it,
The axe of sharp Detachment ye would whet,
  And cleave the clinging snaky roots, and lay
This Aśwattha of sense-life low, — to set

New growths upspringing to that happier sky,—
Which they who reach shall have no day to die,
  Nor fade away, nor fall — to Him, I mean,
FATHER and FIRST, Who made the mystery

Of old Creation; for to Him come they
From passion and from dreams who break away;
  Who part the bonds constraining them to flesh,
And, — Him, the Highest, worshipping alway —

No longer grow at mercy of what breeze
Of summer pleasure stirs the sleeping trees,
  What blast of tempest tears them, bough and stem:
To the eternal world pass such as these!

Another Sun gleams there! another Moon!
Another Light, — not Dusk, nor Dawn, nor Noon —
  Which they who once behold return no more;
They have attained My rest, life's Utmost boon!

XXIII

Know, too, from Me
Shineth the gathered glory of the suns
Which lighten all the world: from Me the moons
Draw silvery beams, and fire fierce loveliness.
I penetrate the clay, and lend all shapes
Their living force; I glide into the plant —
Root, leaf, and bloom — to make the woodlands green
With springing sap. Becoming vital warmth,
I glow in glad, respiring frames, and pass,
With outward and with inward breath, to feed
The body by all meats.

For in this world
Being is twofold: the Divided, one;
The Undivided, one. All things that live
Are "the Divided." That which sits apart,
"The Undivided."

Higher still is He,
The Highest, holding all, whose Name is LORD,
The Eternal, Sovereign, First! Who fills all worlds,
Sustaining them. And — dwelling thus beyond
Divided Being and Undivided — I
Am called of men and Vedas, Life Supreme.

XXIV

Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will
Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand
And governed appetites; and piety,
And love of lonely study; humbleness,
Uprightness, heed to injure nought which lives,
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind
That lightly letteth go what others prize;
And equanimity, and charity
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,
Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,
Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed,
With patience, fortitude, and purity;
An unrevengeful spirit, never given
To rate itself too high; — such be the signs,
O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set
On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth!

XXV

Two stamps there are marked on all living men,
Divine and Undivine; I spake to thee
By what marks thou shouldst know the Heavenly Man,
Hear from me now of the Unheavenly!

They comprehend not, the Unheavenly,
How Souls go forth from Me; nor how they come
Back unto Me: nor is there Truth in these,
Nor purity, nor rule of Life. "This world
Hath not a Law, nor Order, nor a Lord,"
So say they: "nor hath risen up by Cause
Following on Cause, in perfect purposing,
But is none other than a House of Lust."
And, this thing thinking, all those ruined ones —
Of little wit, dark-minded — give themselves
To evil deeds, the curses of their kind.
Surrendered to desires insatiable,
Full of deceitfulness, folly, and pride,
In blindness cleaving to their errors, caught
Into the sinful course, they trust this lie
As it were true — this lie which leads to death —
Finding in Pleasure all the good which is,
And crying "Here it finisheth!"

XXVI

Thus vowed
To self-hood, force, insolence, feasting, wrath,

These My blasphemers, in the forms they wear
And in the forms they breed, my foemen are,
Hateful and hating; cruel, evil, vile,
Lowest and least of men, whom I cast down
Again, and yet again, at end of lives,
Into some devilish womb, whence — birth by birth —
The devilish wombs re-spawn them, all beguiled;
And, till they find and worship Me, sweet Prince!
Tread they that Nether Road.

Hear then the conclusion of The Song Celestial in The Master's final words:

XXVII

Whoso performeth — diligent, content —
The work allotted him, whate'er it be,
Lays hold of perfectness! Hear how a man
Findeth perfection, being so content:
He findeth it through worship — wrought by work —
Of HIM that is the Source of all which lives,
Of HIM by Whom the universe was stretched.

Better thine own work is, though done with fault,
Than doing others' work, ev'n excellently.
He shall not fall in sin who fronts the task

Set him by Nature's hand! Let no man leave
His natural duty, Prince! though it bear blame!
For every work hath blame, as every flame
Is wrapped in smoke! Only that man attains
Perfect surcease of work whose work was wrought
With mind unfettered, soul wholly subdued,
Desires for ever dead, results renounced.

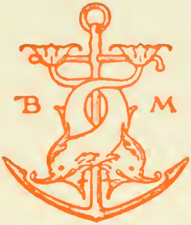
Learn from me, Son of Kunti! also this,
How one, attaining perfect peace, attains
BRAHM, the supreme, the highest height of all!

Devoted — with a heart grown pure, restrained
In lordly self-control, forgoing wiles
Of song and senses, freed from love and hate,
Dwelling 'mid solitudes, in diet spare,
With body, speech, and will tamed to obey,
Ever to holy meditation vowed,
From passions liberate, quit of the Self,
Of arrogance, impatience, anger, pride;
Freed from surroundings, quiet, lacking nought —
Such an one grows to oneness with the BRAHM;
Such an one, growing one with BRAHM, serene,
Sorrows no more, desires no more; his soul,
Equally loving all that lives, loves well
Me, Who have made them, and attains to Me.
By this same love and worship doth he know
Me as I am, how high and wonderful,

And knowing, straightway enters into Me.
And whatsoever deeds he doeth — fixed
In Me, as in his refuge — he hath won
For ever and for ever by My grace
Th' Eternal Rest! So win thou! In thy thoughts
Do all thou dost for Me! Renounce for Me!
Sacrifice heart and mind and will to Me!
Live in the faith of Me! In faith of Me
All dangers thou shalt vanquish, by My grace;
But, trusting to thyself and heeding not,
Thou can'st but perish! If this day thou say'st,
Relying on thyself, "I will not fight!"
Vain will the purpose prove! thy qualities
Would spur thee to the war. What thou dost shun,
Misled by fair illusions, thou wouldst seek
Against thy will, when the task comes to thee
Waking the promptings in thy nature set.
There lives a Master in the hearts of men
Maketh their deeds, by subtle pulling-strings,
Dance to what tune HE will. With all thy soul
Trust Him, and take Him for thy succour, Prince!
So — only so, Arjuna! — shalt thou gain —
By grace of Him — the uttermost repose,
The Eternal Place!
Thus hath been opened thee
This Truth of Truths, the Mystery more hid
Than any secret mystery. Mediate!
And — as thou wilt — then act!

Nay! but once more
Take My last word, My utmost meaning have!
Precious thou art to Me; right well-beloved!
Listen! I tell thee for thy comfort this.
Give Me thy heart! adore Me! serve Me! cling
In faith and love and reverence to me!
So shalt thou come to Me! I promise true,
For thou art sweet to me!
And let go those —
Rites and writ duties! Fly to Me alone!
Make Me thy single refuge! I will free
Thy soul from all its sins! Be of good cheer!

NINE HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES OF THIS BOOK PRINTED ON VAN GELDER HAND-MADE PAPER AND THE TYPE DISTRIBUTED.



L.H

RETURN TO the circulation desk of any
University of California Library
or to the
NORTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
Bldg. 400, Richmond Field Station
University of California
Richmond, CA 94804-4698

ALL BOOKS MAY BE RECALLED AFTER 7 DAYS
2-month loans may be renewed by calling
(510) 642-6753
1-year loans may be recharged by bringing books to NRLF
Renewals and recharges may be made 4 days prior to due date

DUE AS STAMPED BELOW

AUG 14 2001

20,000 (4/94)

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES

C005360325

M31911

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY